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NSC BRIEFING

5 August 1959

BLOC PROPAGANDA REACTION TO EISENHOWER-  
KHRUSHCHEV VISIT AND NIXON TRIP

- I. In domestic news treatment, the Bloc's reaction to the exchange of visits between President Eisenhower and Soviet Premier Khrushchev is approving without exception.
- A. Soviet press bannered the story in space usually reserved for important government or Party announcements, emphasizing Pres. Eisenhower's remark that the exchange may help to "melt a little bit of the ice" chilling US-Soviet relations.
1. Pravda termed the exchange an "historic event."
  - Izvestia declared visits would be of "utmost significance."
  2. Soviet propagandists assert that the visits will open "unprecedented possibilities for settling the entire international situation and strengthening peace."
- B. Press reaction from GDR, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria all in same tone. (No reaction received yet from Albania, Rumania and Czechoslovakia, but anticipate similar treatment.)
- C. Peiping and Pyongyang (Hanoi thus far silent on matter) declare the visits a victory of Soviet diplomatic initiative. US pictured as negative and "forced" to agree to visits.
- II. Moscow's initial propaganda reaction to the Vice President's TV-radio speech of 1 August in Moscow stressed his alleged failure to offer an adequate reply to questions repeatedly posed as to why the United States is encircling the Soviet Union with military bases, and accused the Vice President of "distorting" Soviet foreign policy.

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- A. Soviet broadcasts at the same time have endorsed his statements regarding peaceful settlement of disputes and expansion of contacts between the United States and the USSR.
1. A 2 August broadcast characterized the Vice President as a "brilliant orator who knows how to present his ideas." It suggested that the few days that he spent in the USSR had left a deep impression on him and that he seems to have "corrected certain ideas he had about the USSR."
  2. Soviet commentators acknowledged that the speech contained "many good words and interested ideas." They observed that one "valuable thing" in the Vice President's speech was "his understanding of the might and strength of our country."
- B. Soviet dissemination of the speech included publication of the full text in Izvestia on 2 August, a 300-word account in Pravda, and a live broadcast which was simultaneous with the television presentation, carried for Moscow audiences, but not on the main home service program.
1. According to available information, the speech has not yet been broadcast internally on any Soviet programs outside the Moscow area.
- C. On 4 August Izvestia offered a point-by-point refutation of the speech, stressing alleged US opposition to Soviet proposals for settlement of key international issues, notably disarmament and nuclear test cessation.
- D. However, Ambassador Thompson reports speech "extremely effective" with Soviet audience.

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III. Nixon visit to Warsaw generally overshadowed in bloc propaganda by the impact of exchange of visits between Eisenhower and Khrushchev.

Nixon

A. Polish press at first treated/visit with reserve, ignoring tumultuous popular reaction. After announcement of exchange of visits, attitude changed and mention was made of "cordial ovations" given to Mr. and Mrs. Nixon.

1. One Polish paper criticized New York Times which had said Nixon's reception may "affect profoundly the political scene." The Polish paper declared it was only "traditional Polish hospitality."

B. Remainder of bloc, including Moscow, reported visit factually and very briefly, with no mention of popular reaction in Poland.

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